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WASHINGTON:

THE STATE AND ITS EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

BY HAROLD L. HODGKINSON

INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP, INC. / CENTER FOR DEMOGRAPHIC POLICY

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However, errors of fact or interpretation remain the responsibility of the author.

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Note on the cover:

Our cover indicates the dominance of the western half of the state in a population sense. (Also, Portland is becoming the second largest metropolitan area in Washington, as it continues to move north.) Over eighty percent of the Washington population live in the state's nine metro areas. County views of metro areas can be misleading, however—Bellingham does *not* extend throughout Whatcom County, as the map would suggest. Population "maps" can be very useful for people who are looking for the human equivalent to rivers and mountains, including planners, marketers and even educators!

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PREFACE

The following pages include a brief demographic analysis of the background to educational programs in the state of Washington. I am grateful that Harold Hodgkinson has turned his perceptive eye toward our corner of the United States.

While we have much to cherish and to be proud of in Washington, in our own way, we share the problems that beset other parts of the nation. Especially critical are those problems that make it difficult for children to learn and to prosper as adults. As we continue to look with hope toward the future, programs designed to overcome poverty and to communicate past the dissonances caused by great cultural diversity will emerge as major needs for our education system.

Those who read this analysis carefully cannot fail to note the subtle challenge that it contains—a state that is relatively well educated and more affluent should be able to cope with its educational problems, if only it has the will to do so.

Judith A. Billings

Judith A. Billings
Superintendent of Public Instruction
State of Washington

WASHINGTON—THE STATE AND ITS EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

INTRODUCTION

All states have their paradoxes, but Washington has more than its share. On a clear day, its major city, Seattle, looks like a freshly washed pearl just taken from the ocean. Yet this city has formidable rates of alcoholism and suicide, and a large gay community with a major increase in gonorrhea cases during 1989, suggesting an even higher AIDS potential in the future. The lush green western third of the state (often called ecotopia by analysts like Joel Garreau) contains some of the nation's most active environmentalists, while the easternmost third is composed mostly of small town conservatives who would fit nicely in the Heartland. While its southern neighbor, Oregon, has engaged in the most careful urban planning and development, Washington seems to have a fair amount of urban sprawl, especially hotels and office space.

One thing that is not debatable is the tradition of major influence on national politics through leaders like Warren Magnuson, Henry Jackson and, more recently, Tom Foley. The legacy of the Magnuson years still reflects on the fortune of the University of Washington and its excellent research facilities, particularly in health, sciences and engineering—always in the top ten institutions in terms of federal research dollars. The *Chronicle of Higher Education* for November 29, 1989, listed the University of Washington as sixth in the nation in federal funds for research and development with a total of $160 million, ahead of Harvard, Yale, Columbia and Berkeley. However, when research funds from *all* sources are included, University of Washington drops to 13th, suggesting the strong federal and congressional influence.

(When this author came to Washington, D.C. to direct the National Institute of Education, the Appropriations Committee Chairman was Senator Magnuson. I was immediately advised to get to know Harley Dirks, one of Magnuson's chief aides, and rumored to be the author of much of the health legislation passed during the Magnuson years.) Jackson, of course, was the founder of much of the environmental legislation that preserved much of the state and national wilderness areas. Speaker Foley may not have the power of the other two, but his influence as "House traffic cop" knows few bounds.

The state's economy has been dominated by the Boeing Company, world leader in civilian aircraft and in military weapons systems. Unfortunately, both of these are highly irregular markets to say the least, and with the likely decline in military budgets due to the 1989 revolutions in Eastern Europe and shifting postures around NATO, the mercurial Washington economy may continue to bounce around in the nineties. The problem with manufacturing as the dominant economic sector of a state concerns the dependency of the jobs that are "upstream and downstream" from the manufacturing plants. Insurance, parking services, food services—all are dependent on the major manufacturer who buys their service. For every Boeing job (and according to Data Resources, Inc. (DRI) there are 91,000), between four and six other jobs are generated. Thus, if Boeing declines by one job, the state could lose four to six more. The good news is that the percentage of the state's work force that is employed by Boeing is declining, due to small business starts and job expansion in other business areas. Some data sources state that the percentage of the Washington work force working for Boeing has dropped from 20 to 10 percent, but this may be a tad optimistic.

Although the job total (about 3,700) is small in comparison, Weyerhaeuser has proved to be a world leader in tree farming and plant genetics, and has developed very effective international export strategies. They represent a formidable asset for Washington in the next decade, but do not increase the diversity of the state's economy enough to ride through the next wave of economic turbulence. Microsoft also diversifies the state's economy but employs only about 1,500 people, according to DRI. But with the addition of Egghead Discount Software and several other companies, a "critical mass" of software producers could easily develop in Washington.

With this as a little background, let's look at the state's major demographic characteristics shown in the demographic profile of Washington.

WASHINGTON PROFILE

		Rank	United States
1988 Population	4,619,000	19th	245,807,000
Population Increase, 1980-88	+11.8%	15th	+8.5%
Population Projection (2000)	4,991,000	18th	267,747,000
Percent of the Population:			
Over Age 65 (1987)	11.8%	31st	12.3%
Living in Metro Areas (1987)	81.2%	13th	76.9%
Black Population (1988)	113,000	N.A.	30,165,000
Hispanic Population (1985)	115,800	N.A.	15,698,900*
Birth Rate (per 1,000 population, 1986)	15.6	21st	15.6
Percent to Teenage Mothers	10.4%	32nd	12.6%
Percent to Unmarried Women	9.8%	27th	23.4%
Infant Deaths (per 1,000 births, 1986)	9.8	28th	10.4
Non-Federal Doctors (per 100,000 population, 1986)	202	13th	205
Hospital Beds (per 100,000 population, 1986)	372	48th	532
Average Daily Room Charge (1986)	$281	10th	$253
Percent Change in Crime Rate (1985-87)	+7.5%	18th	+6.5%
Violent Crime Rate (per 100,000 population, 1987)	439	23rd	609
Forcible Rape (per 100,000 population, 1986)	53.4	5th	37.5
Burglaries (per 100,000 population, 1986)	1,861	5th	1,345
Larceny Thefts (per 100,000 population, 1986)	4,267	3rd	3,010
Divorces (per 1,000 population, 1986)	5.8	11th	4.8
Percent of the Population Who Voted in 1988 Presidential Election	54.6%	19th	50.2%
Social Security Payees (as a percent of the 1987 population)	14.8%	35th	15.3%
AFDC Recipients** (as a percent of the 1987 population)	5.8%	20th	6.2%
Per Capita Income (1987)	$15,599	16th	$15,481
Bank Deposits Per Capita (1987)	$5,642	45th	$8,134
Federal Defense Funds (Total)	$5.7 Billion	12th	$215 Bil.
Gross State Product (1986)	$77.6 Billion	16th	
Residential Energy Use (1985)	90M.BTU/cap	1st	63M
Export-related Manufacturing (as a percent of all manufacturing)	17.2%	2nd	11.4%
Percent Change in Housing Starts (1985-87)	+19.5%	5th	−10.2%
Percent Change in Existing Home Sales (1985-87)	−13.8%	50th	−0.3%

*The number of Hispanics in the U.S. in 1988 according to the Census Bureau was 20,383,000.
**Includes also Federal Supplemental Security Income.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *Statistical Abstracts of the United States, 1989* and *North Carolina State Data Center, State Rankings*, 1989.

The picture we can paint from these numbers is of a fairly large and diverse state, whose population is expanding slightly more rapidly than the nation as a whole, but whose *rate* of growth is manageable. (Nonwhite populations are increasing more rapidly than whites, and certain areas of the state, especially the western third, are getting most of the increase and most of the diversity. Washington does have an unusual mix of people, with Asian, Hispanic and black at four percent of the population each, and American Indians about two percent, at least in terms of the state's *youth* population. About 14 percent of the youth are nonwhite and about eight percent of the adult population.) Although elderly populations are increasing the most rapidly in the nation, that is not a current issue in Washington, as their percentage of persons over the age of 65 is below the national average.

Birth rates are at the national average. Births to teenage and unmarried mothers, as well as infant deaths, are below the national average, suggesting a healthy situation for youth. However, the medical facilities suggest some problems, with enough doctors but a major shortage of hospital beds and very expensive daily hospital rates.

While crime rates are increasing faster than the nation, violent crime, and particularly murder, are below the country's rates. However, the state ranks *seventh* in all types of crime, and *fifth* in forcible rapes per 100,000 population in 1986! The state is also fifth in burglaries and third in larceny thefts in 1986, while robbery rates were 22nd. While these numbers can be interpreted in many ways, one possibility is that many people in Washington are very unhappy and have no reasonable way of getting rid of these feelings, leaving them to lash out at others, especially those who cannot defend themselves—women in the case of rape, and those not at home in terms of burglary. To support that notion, Washington was ranked 13th in suicides in 1985. Indeed, the suicide rates are almost unbelievably high in states thought to be the most beautiful in terms of scenery! (See Table 1 below.)

Except for the southeast, all regions of the nation are represented. With the possible exception of Oklahoma, the rest are all places of outstanding natural beauty—oceans, lovely mountains, etc. Why, when living in the "Garden of Eden," do so many people kill themselves? American Indians are a small part of the answer, with a suicide rate three times the national average. Low densities explain some of it, except for Florida and California (both states have sparsely populated areas, but that's not where suicides peak). Just as suicides rise at holiday times, it may be that if you live in a state in which people are *supposed* to be deliriously happy, and you're not, there would be a tendency to take your own life. While divorce is not a crime, divorce rates were included to point out that even people's *marriages* are not happy in Washington. Washington ranks 14th in the number of divorces. The real answer to the suicide question is that no one knows—yet.

Table 1
Suicides Per 100,000 Population, 1985

Rank	State
1.	Wyoming
2.	Nevada
3.	Colorado
4.	Arizona, Montana, New Mexico (three-way tie)
7.	Florida
8.	Oregon
9.	Oklahoma
10.	California
11.	Vermont, Maine (tie)
13.	Washington, Alaska (tie)

Source: North Carolina State Data Center, *State Ranks, 1989*.

Indeed, in terms of pay and disposable income, most Washingtonians are pretty well off, even with a high unemployment rate in most years. Additional growth can be expected in export-related manufacturing in the future, which may be the life saver in the state's economy if defense funds begin to slide.

Voter participation, while above the national average, is not what one would expect from one of the most college-educated populations in the nation. A smaller percentage of people are in federal support programs, from Aid to Families With Dependent Children (AFDC) to Social Security, than the nation as a whole. Indeed, in terms of pay and disposable income, most Washingtonians are pretty well off, even with a high unemployment rate in most years. Additional growth can be expected in export-related manufacturing in the future, which may be the life saver in the state's economy if defense funds begin to slide. Agriculture is basically healthy, and in the orchard industries, we can expect an increase in the desire for "perfect fruit," given the recent changes in America's food preferences. The Alar deterrant to apple sales should be eliminated by the 1990 or 1991 seasons. The desire for "perfect" ice cream and cookies, while dominated by Yuppies who are often not doing well economically but have sophisticated tastes and are in "paté poverty," is also held by others, and orchard products may be added to the list, making lots of money for customized agriculture. However, putting gobs of money in the *bank* seems not to be the style in Washington, either for families or corporations.

The lack of existing home sales plus a major increase in housing starts means that new areas are being populated rapidly—a good index of the growth of new suburban areas. Whether these new areas will be annexed to existing townships or will become new economic and political entities will be a major question for the decade. Before looking at educational issues, let's have a quick look at Washington's major city.

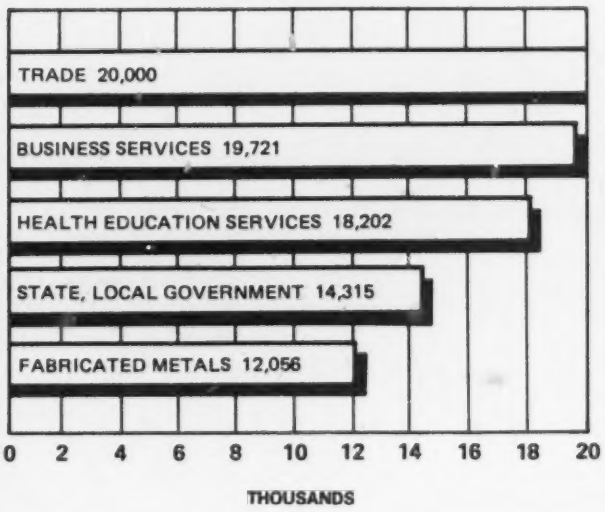
SEATTLE—GATEWAY TO THE PACIFIC RIM

Seattle, the only area in Washington to be among the largest 100 metropolitan areas in the nation, has been blessed with a splendid deep water port, while Puget Sound represents one of the prime water recreation areas in the west as well. Forty percent of the state's population lives there, and *50* percent of the jobs are there. In that, banking, finance and government services tend to follow jobs, Seattle is also the center of activities in those areas. As the primary trade and distribution center for the Pacific Northwest, transportation and warehousing are important parts of the Seattle economy. Interstates 5 and 90 provide excellent road service in all directions, (except westward, which would run you into the ocean) and the Sea-Tac airport plus extensive rail capacity add to the transportation mix.

Both counties have gained population during the decade, with King County at about 1,400,000 and Snohomish County at about 450,000. It is expected that population gains will continue in both counties for the next several years. It is the 24th largest metro area in the nation, with about 1.9 million residents.

Although Seattle is dependent on Boeing (91,000 jobs there at present) the dependency is declining due to the increasing diversification of the Seattle economy and work force in the directions already stated—trade, services, finance and government. Although the 1982-83 recession had a greater impact on Seattle than on the nation as a whole, the rebound since then in Seattle has been proportionately strong. Growth in the number of jobs has averaged 3.9 percent a year from 1977-87, and has increased to 4.6 percent after 1983. Jobs seem to be growing a little faster than the population. For example, the "winners" in terms of additional jobs in the Seattle economy are shown in Figure 1 below.

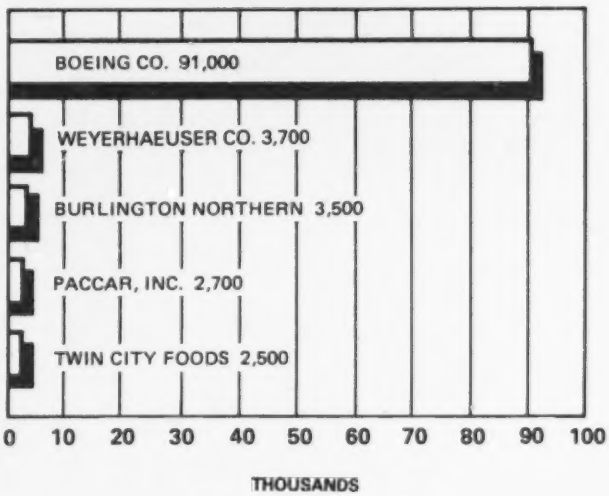
Figure 1
Job Growth "Winners" 1983-1987


TRADE 20,000
BUSINESS SERVICES 19,721
HEALTH EDUCATION SERVICES 18,202
STATE, LOCAL GOVERNMENT 14,315
FABRICATED METALS 12,056
0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20
THOUSANDS

Source: Data Resources, Inc., *Trinet*, 1989.

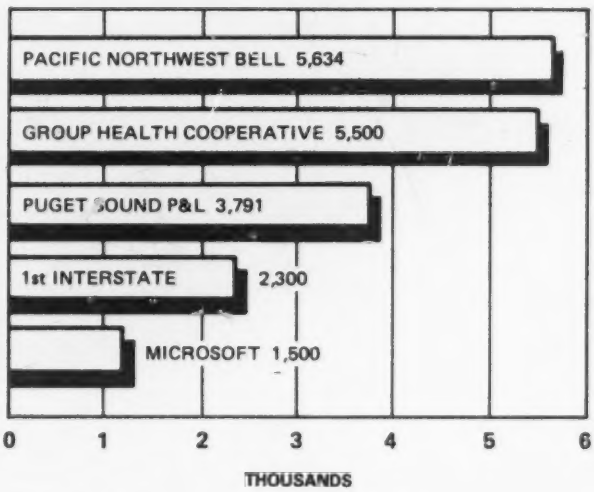
To get an overall sense of the job structure, let's look at Seattle's chief manufacturers and service providers. As you do, keep in mind that with the (major) exception of Boeing, the largest employers are in services, not manufacturing (see Figures 2 and 3).

Figure 2
Seattle's Major Manufacturers
1989 Jobs


BOEING CO. 91,000
WEYERHAEUSER CO. 3,700
BURLINGTON NORTHERN 3,500
PACCAR, INC. 2,700
TWIN CITY FOODS 2,500
0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100
THOUSANDS

Source: Data Resources, Inc., *EstiMarket*, 1989.

Figure 3
Seattle's Major Service Industries
1989 Jobs



Source: Data Resources, Inc., *EstiMarket*, 1989.

What we *cannot* determine from the data presented above is the average wage of these jobs—a casual guess is that Seattle's leading manufacturers are paying as much as a third more than the major service industries, across the board. Another way of thinking about it is that the fastest growing part of the Seattle economy is *business services sold to other businesses*. This is where the domination of Boeing gets extreme—in the four jobs generated by each Boeing hire. Many of these are subcontractor jobs in instruments, machinery, etc., but even more are in business services, from real estate to auditing. Boeing's backlog of orders for commercial aircraft represent future stability, even with some present and future strike issues in the work force. Given the likely uncertainty of defense budgets in the coming years, defense *manufacturing* is the most vulnerable part of military expenditures. Boeing has carefully reduced its profile in certain defense areas already, partly through court actions.

One of Seattle's major assets in the future is its extraordinarily well-educated labor force. Of the top 100 metros, Seattle ranks *98th* in percentage of workers who are high school dropouts, and *ninth* in workers who have attended college. The combination of unionized high-wage manufacturing jobs with very skilled non-manufacturing jobs has produced a very large "top end" to the wage levels in the metro area. Because of this youngish, well-educated population, the Seattle consumer market is younger with fewer children, more affluent and more homogeneous than the typical top 100 metros. It ranks *18th* of the top 100 metros in discretionary income, creating a broad demand for a variety of products and services, thereby encouraging small business starts and an increasingly diverse economy.

While the typical top 100 metro is 80 percent white, Seattle's population is 90 percent white. While the typical metro is 14 percent black, Seattle is 3.6 percent black. It is at the metro average for "other" races (6 percent), including Asians, Hispanics and American Indians. In addition, Seattle ranks *92nd* of the top 100 in the percentage of households with children under age 18. While Seattle is an expensive place to live in terms of health care and transportation costs, it is fairly cheap in housing and energy costs, due to heavy use of hydroelectric generation.

Overall, Seattle's strengths are as a trade and distribution center, with excellent location for Canadian and Asiatic trade expansions. Diversity in the "high end" of the services, a well-educated population and work force, low housing and utilities costs and easy access to recreation all increase the quality of life. Its weaknesses are equally apparent—the continuing dependence on Boeing, particularly for the jobs that are Boeing-dependent even though Boeing doesn't pay their salaries, its high cost for health care and transportation, and the potential of a major increase in industrial energy costs due to the earlier bond default of the state's public power agency and the unanticipated high costs of nuclear power development. On balance, this is a very favorable portrait of a metro area with far more positives than negatives.

We could easily develop profiles of other cities in Washington, but because none of them are in the top 100 category, comparative data for evaluation purposes are virtually non-existent. Because the Seattle metro area represents about half the state's people and jobs, the focus on this one metro seems reasonable in thinking about the state's future. One has to remember that the eastern half of the state is as night to day in comparison with Seattle. Having a sense of what the state is like, we can now look more directly at the state's educational system.

WASHINGTON'S EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

As of 1988-89, there were 296 operating public school districts in Washington, enrolling 790,459 students. There are a number of large school districts (46.7 percent of pupils are enrolled in the 22 largest districts of over 10,000 students each, while 84 percent of the students are in the 89 districts that have more than 2,000 each). There are also a fairly large number of very small districts (69 districts enroll fewer than 200 students each). About a quarter of the students are in the 20 counties in "eastern Washington," while three quarters are in the 19 counties of "western Washington."

A well developed system of nine educational service districts tends to equalize programs and services across the state, providing things that districts could not provide for themselves, such as handicapped education, driver education, pupil transportation, data processing, vocational education, instructional materials, maintenance, etc. Educational service units are becoming a major force in education, particularly in sparsely populated areas in which additional consolidation is impossible due to the distances involved. Also, they can bring efficiency to small districts through volume purchasing and shared data processing.

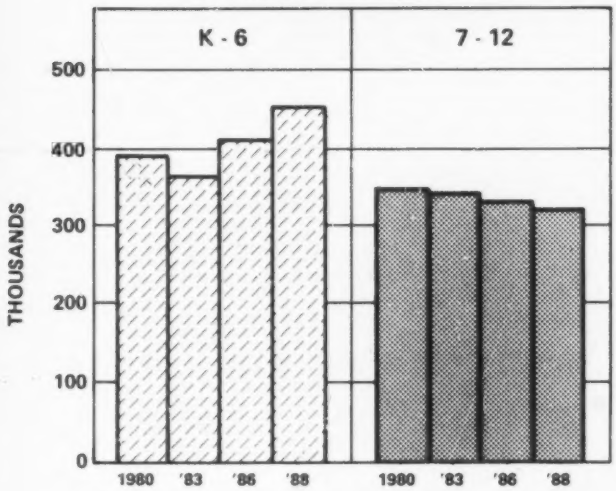
Overall enrollments have increased since 1983 (see Table 4 below), the year when the earlier decline was reversed. An interesting fact is that secondary enrollments were still declining in 1988 when elementary enrollments had been increasing since 1983 (see Figure 4).

Table 4
Public School Enrollment
Selected Years

1980	756,540
1983	736,094
1986	761,720
1988	790,000

Source: *Education in Washington*, 1988.

Figure 4
Elementary and Secondary Public School Enrollments Selected Years



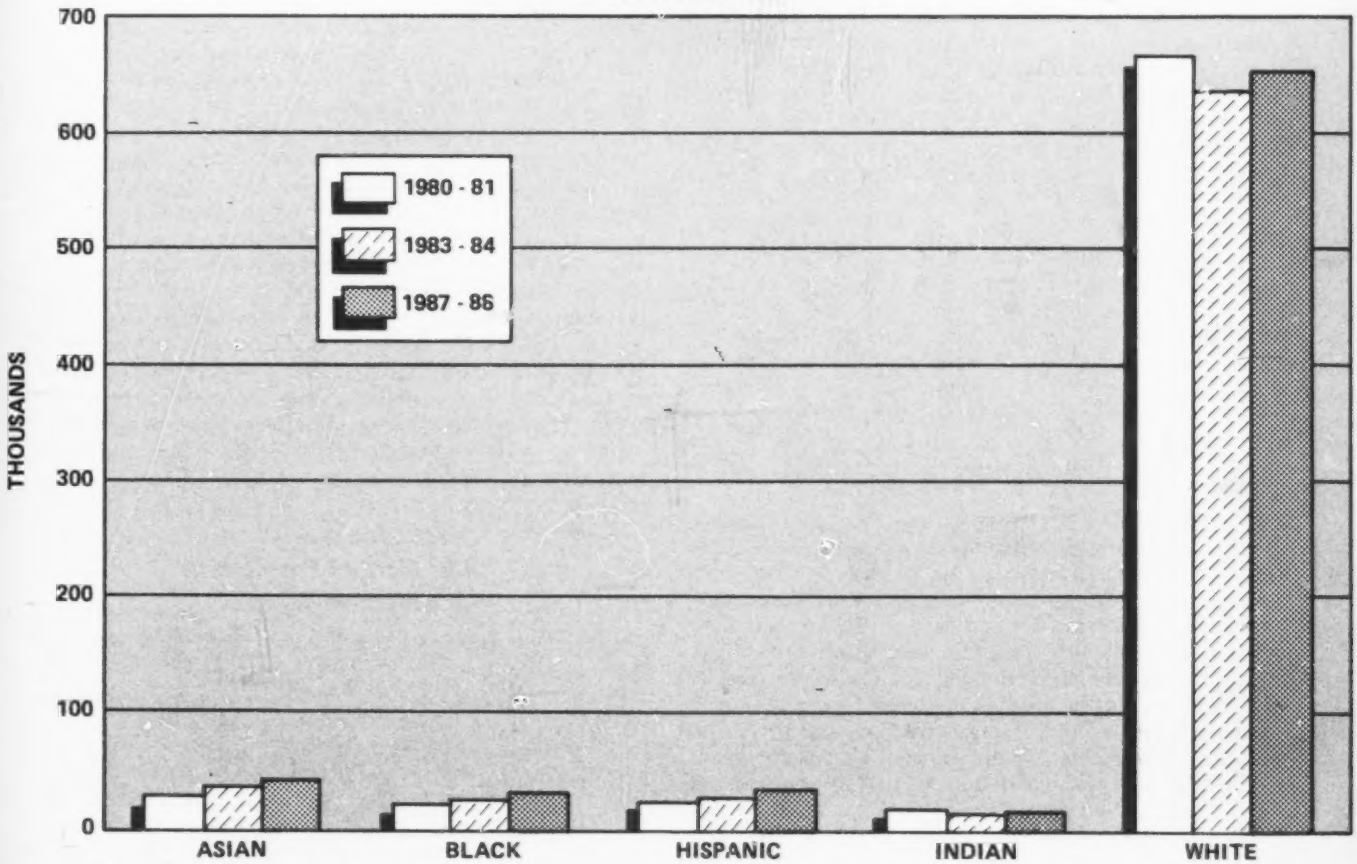
Source: *Education in Washington*, 1988.

By 1988, a number of the 1983-88 K-6 enrollment increases should have worked their way through the educational pipeline to secondary school, causing enrollments there to stabilize or increase. Yet secondary enrollments were still dropping in 1988. The state also provides a much better breakdown on students' ethnic background than that provided by federal sources (see Figure 5).

While 30 percent of the nation's students were nonwhite in 1988, 17 percent of Washington's students were. Asian, black and Hispanic enrollments showed steady growth, while American Indian and white enrollments dipped from 1980-84, then turned around. Additional data from the Education Secretary's "Wall Chart" for 1989 is shown in Table 5.

Between 1990 and 2010, the under 18 year-old population of the state is predicted to decline from 1,173,000 to 1,098,000, about a six percent drop. The minority percentage will increase to 19.5 percent in 2010, when the nation's youth will be 38.2 percent nonwhite, according to *American Demographics*, May, 1989. The increase in the number of children in poverty and children in single parent households go together, even though the percentage in poverty is low by national standards. While 80

Figure 5
Public School Enrollment by Race Selected Years



Source: *Education in Washington*, 1988.

Table 5
Selected Data on Washington's Children and Educational System

		Rank	U.S.
Percent Handicapped Children	9.5%	(42nd)	11.1%
Percent Children Age 5-17 In Poverty	10.3%	(44th)	
Teacher's Salary (1988)	$28,217	(16th)	$22,954
Per Capita Income (1987)	$15,599*	(16th)	$15,481
Per Pupil Expenditures (1987)	$3,964	(20th)	$4,209
Student-Faculty Ratio	20.2	(46th)	17.6
Graduation Rate	77.8%	(17th)	71.1%
Seniors with Advanced Placement Courses (1988)	8.6%	(23rd)	10.6%
Sources of Funding (1987):			
Local	20.2%		
State	74.1%		
Federal	5.7%		
Children in Single-parent Homes:			
1980	242,000		14,069,000
1987	298,000		15,859,000
Number of Children (0–18 years) in Poverty:			
1980	177,000		11,214,000
1987	255,000		13,714,000

*1988 per capita income is $16,473, according to U.S. Census Bureau.
Source: U.S. Department of Education, Secretary's Office, *State Educational Performance Chart*, 1989, and Population Reference Bureau, *General Demographics and Social Characteristics of State Populations*, 1988.

percent of Washington's population lives in the state's nine metropolitan areas, rural poverty is not unknown, especially in the eastern half of the state.

The percentage of local tax funds in the state's education budget is extraordinarily small (20 percent compared to the national average of 43.8 percent) suggesting a high degree of state involvement in policy, based on the "Golden Rule"—whoever has the gold makes the rule. In addition, class sizes in Washington are very high indeed compared with the nation, although in 1982 they were even larger. (The more students are alike, the more a state can get away with larger class sizes, as is the case in Utah. However, in California, which now has the largest classes and a great deal of student diversity, the result is very low performance. Washington is much more like Utah than California in this regard, but the class size issue probably needs some reassessment.)

Because Washington has its own test for seniors, neither SAT nor ACT data are available for national achievement comparisons. However, the Metropolitan Achievement Test data for fourth, eighth and tenth grades (reported with a very useful technique known as "box and whisker") suggest that across the board, Washington students do as well or better than the nation, with the consistent exception of spelling.

While ranking 17th in school dropouts is good compared to the (miserable) national average of 30 percent, the state has such a highly educated adult population, relatively low levels of youth in poverty and a rather homogenous population campared to the nation, you would expect a rate comparable to Minnesota's, which leads the nation in the percentage of students who graduate from high school. (Only nine percent of Minnesota's students drop out, while 22.2 percent drop out in Washington state.) Generally, the higher the percentage of college-educated adults, the better students do in school and the more they tend to graduate from high school and go on to college. Some studies have reported that having college-educated parents predicts educational achievement a little better than SAT scores. For some reason, Washington's well educated adults seem not to motivate their children toward high school graduation.

Highly segregated minority populations usually drop out of school in large numbers, but Gary Orfield's data on Seattle schools suggests a high degree of integration for both black and Hispanic students. Only 4.5 percent of Seattle's black students were in 90 to 100 percent non-white schools in 1987. The typical black student attended a school that was 43 percent white, the average Hispanic student attended a school that was 47 percent white in 1987. (In Chicago, the typical black attends a school which is 6 percent white.) This relatively integrated pool should mean a high level of minority completion of high school. That cannot be checked out, but it does appear that Washington has more dropouts than would be predicted from the background data.

HIGHER EDUCATION IN WASHINGTON STATE

Before closing out our discussion, a brief look at the higher education system in Washington would be useful. The system is typical of western states, being overwhelmingly public in terms of total students enrolled as is shown in Table 6. These students spread out across 54 institutions of higher education and 166 vocational institutes in the state.

Table 6

Enrollment in Higher Education Institutions, 1988

Type	Students
Public 4-year Institutions	77,722
Public 2-year Institutions	136,485
Private 4-year Institutions	30,258
Private 2-year Institutions	1,407
Total Enrollment	245,872

Number of Higher Education Institutions by Type

Type	Number
Public 4-year	6
Public 2-year	27
Private 4-year	19
Private 2-year	2
Vocational Institutions	166

Source: Almanac, *Chronicle of Higher Education*. September 6, 1989.

The system is quite diversified—the universities in the state are well regarded (particularly in terms of federal research dollars for the University of Washington, but the others also have distinctions of importance) while the 27 community colleges carry the lion's share of the head count, and the private four-year institutions are actually awarding about 25 percent of the baccalaureate degrees in the state. While there is a Higher Education Coordinating Board for the four-year public institutions, each has a separate governing board as well. Similarly, the State Board of Community Colleges has overall jurisdiction of those institutions, but each also has its own governing board. (Many western states seem to prefer a large number of governing bodies, to put it mildly.) It is unfortunate that the impact of the 166 vocational institutions is seldom discussed in Washington, apparently on the assumption that they are not "part of the system."

Also a western tradition is the fact that 92 percent of all Washington residents who attend college do so in their home state. The state is currently providing about $719 million for operating expenses, up about 14 percent over the last two years, less than the national average. However, in 1988 the state legislature approved a plan to build five new branch campuses in the next 20 years, to be connected with either the University of Washington or Washington State, even though the state's overall growth rate would make one wonder about such a decision. However, $46 million was also appropriated to start planning and to purchase land, indicating a major commitment in this area. (Part of the goal is to diversify the economy by allowing workers in areas not now serviced by higher education to develop new skills outside of those needed in lumber and aerospace.) It seems fair to say that Governor Gardner, as well as the state's business community, has been interested in improving the state's economy by tuning up its educational system.

One problem concerns the low percentage of minority students in Washington's higher education system, even though intensive efforts are made to increase their numbers. Access for females seems open enough (54 percent of all students are women) but we have no way of knowing what the odds are for minority women.

Overall, higher education in Washington seems to be fashioned from the motivations of excellence, and more recently, access to the system at some point for all adult citizens of the state. Although there are many questions to be raised about execution, there could be few quarrels about the commitments. It is unfortunate that higher education leaders do not seem to always comprehend that they can be no better than Washington's public schools.

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CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We have described Washington as a natural jewel, glistening in its Seattle environment, and much more "Heartland"-like, yet still beautiful, on the eastern half. Yet the *people* who reside in all this beauty tend to commit suicide, to rob and to rape far more often than the national average. Does the gorgeous environment attract unhappy people? Or do people become unhappy living in such a place, knowing that they are *supposed* to be happy? No one will ever know with certainty, but it seems that more than the "rainy season" is involved.

The economy is heavily influenced by two factors: one, the remarkable political success of the Jackson-Magnuson era, in getting funds for the state, especially in health research funds; two, the domination of the economy by Boeing. While diversification has continued into fields like business services and software, the dependency remains large. What follows is a collection of some problems and recommended courses of action.

1. The dependence on Boeing is strong, but weakening. Further growth of new businesses of a variety of sorts will help reduce this dependency, not by reducing Boeing, but by increasing the other sectors of the economy. Additional needs for venture capital, and for expertise in the techniques of starting small businesses, will go along with this push.

2. The Washington public schools seem to operate in a rather well-coordinated system. The same can be said for the state's higher education system. But between the two systems there seems to be a very wide highway that few people travel. There exists a need for some state efforts to increase the coordination between these two systems—neither can do well without the other. No one benefits by having a youngster drop out of a Washington high school—in fact, there is an 80 percent chance that that dropout could become a prisoner, absorbing $24,000 in state and federal funds each year.

3. Although the total minority school population is a smaller percentage than the national average, it is unusual in that Asians, blacks, Hispanics and American Indians are represented in almost equal numbers. But they total only 17 percent, while in the nation's minority youth are about 30 percent. Washington has great diversity in the *range* of cultures represented, but no minority group has the numbers to be taken very seriously politically.

4. Because the percentage of adults who have attended college is so great, one would naturally assume that the dropout rate from Washington's schools would be proportionately low. Yet, that is not the case. Efforts to reduce the dropout rate might be very successful, given the percentage of adults who have benefited from higher education in the state. An increasing number of three-year-old children in Washington are eligible for Head Start-like programs, but there is no program available for many of them. A statewide commitment to ensure that every child arrives at the kindergarten door (1) in good physical health, (2) from a stable and supportive home environment, and (3) feeling good enough about their potential future so that they will try their best in school, would pay off in a variety of ways in improving the lives of all Washingtonians over the next 40 years.

WASHINGTON—
SUMMARY OF MAJOR POINTS

1. This is a "high contrast" state, with beautiful scenery, well educated people, and some of the highest rape, larceny and suicide rates in the nation. Although every state has contrasts built in, the eastern half of Washington has precious little in common with the population nestled along the coast. The question of why there is so much grief in such a Nirvana is worthy of action. (The weather does not answer the question.)
2. The state's economy, long dominated by the Boeing Company, is now diversifying in a very healthy way, although Boeing remains a very large percentage of the state's worker payroll. The Washington work force is very well-educated by national standards, with almost 40 percent of the adults in the Seattle metro area having had some college.
3. The state's ethnic mix, at least among its youth, is unusual—about equal numbers of blacks, Hispanics, American Indians and Asians. (Total minority youth population in Washington is about 17 percent, compared to 30 percent for the United States.) Washington's future will be increasingly dependent on the ability of the political system to support minority development programs for youth, as this group represents the only certain increase in the state population in the future.
4. The state's location enhances its role in trade with Canada and with the Pacific Rim nations. Both are likely to be major advantages in the future. Therefore, for pragmatic reasons, the state's educational resources should focus on a variety of transnational issues and teaching examples, given that each of the four major sources of diversity are present in Washington's schools, in about equal numbers.
5. The contrast between eastern Washington and the western half of the state is vast, in terms of density, way of life, businesses and jobs, access to higher education, income and most other things. For this reason, it is difficult for Washington to "get its act together."